

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at line 3 of Page 5 to:

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In a second feature of the present invention, the damper 18 includes a negative force characteristic. The damper 18 interconnects the axle assembly 20 and the chassis 22. The damper 18 is mounted between axle 20 and chassis 22 to provide a dampening force to the axle assembly 20 as is known. Preferably, when the suspension system 10 is unloaded the damper 18 slows the unloaded movement of the longitudinal member 14. This allows the axle assembly 20 to fall away from the chassis 22 at a controlled rate. The controlled rate provides additional time for an anti-vacuum system (shown schematically at 60 in Figure 2) to operate.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the following claims to:

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1. (AMENDED) An air spring for a vehicle air suspension system comprising:
a piston attached to a longitudinal member pivotally attached to a chassis component for pivotal movement about an axis; and
a deformable air cell having a first end attached to said piston and a second end attached to said chassis component, said second end having a greater diameter than said first end, said piston moving to deform said deformable air cell.

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5. (AMENDED) The system as recited in claim 4, wherein said air cell includes an anti-vacuum system and a damper disposed between said axle assembly and said chassis component, said damper extendable at a rate which allows said anti-vacuum system to equalize a pressure within said air cell with atmospheric pressure as said longitudinal member pivots about said axis away from said chassis component.

6. (AMENDED) An air suspension system for a vehicle comprising:
- a longitudinal member pivotally attached to a chassis component for pivotal movement about an axis;
 - an axle assembly mounted to said longitudinal member;
 - air spring having a deformable frustro-conical air cell and a piston, said air spring disposed between said longitudinal member and said chassis component, said air cell having a first end attached to said piston and a second end attached to said chassis component;
 - an anti-vacuum system within said air spring, said anti-vacuum system operable to equalize a pressure within said air cell with atmospheric pressure as said longitudinal member pivots about said axis away from said chassis component; and
 - a damper disposed between said axle assembly and said chassis component, said damper extendable at a rate which allows said anti-vacuum system to equalize a pressure within said air cell with atmospheric pressure as said longitudinal member pivots about said axis away from said chassis component and said piston moving to deform said deformable air cell.
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